

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 761

By Herron

A RESOLUTION to congratulate Emily Avery Miller, a Junior at the University of Tennessee Martin, on winning the 2004 NCAA Inspiration Award.

WHEREAS, each year the NCAA Honors Committee, composed of eight athletics administrators at member institutions and nationally distinguished citizens who are former student-athletes, select an Award of Valor recipient and three Inspiration Award recipients; one of the Inspiration Award recipients for 2004 was Emily Avery Miller, a Junior majoring in Spanish at the University of Tennessee Martin; and

WHEREAS, born October 5, 1982, Emily, the daughter of Catherine Greenslade and Ronald "Mack" Greenslade, her stepfather, graduated from Collierville High School and matriculated at the University of Tennessee Martin, where she majored in Spanish, was named to the Dean's List, and became a member of the University of Tennessee Skyhawk soccer team; and

WHEREAS, as a freshman in 2001, Emily played in fifteen games and had two shots, one goal, two assists, and four points; as a sophomore, she played in nineteen games and had seven shots, one goal, and two points in the team's 9-7-3 record; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2003, she returned home and consulted the family's orthopedic surgeon concerning a persistent leg pain that had become unbearable and was referred to an oncologist; and

WHEREAS, two days later Emily underwent a biopsy and less than a week later was admitted to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, where she was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma, a bone cancer; she underwent four rounds of chemotherapy, the surgical removal of spots on her left lung, seven hours of surgery to remove a tumor on her femur, the

removal of her knee and portions of her femur and tibia, and the implantation of a titanium prosthesis extending from the top of her thigh to just above her ankle; and

WHEREAS, fewer than 36 hours following surgery, Emily was released from the intensive care unit and five days later she left the hospital; after 14 weeks of intensive rehabilitation, she learned to walk again and regained a remarkable 125 degrees of bend in her knee; and

WHEREAS, although separated from her teammates by distance and illness, Emily continued to regard her membership on the team as one of the greatest importance; she wrote to them, "When the going really gets tough and you just don't think you have it in you to take another step, rub your purple pre-wrap bracelet and know that I am cheering you each on as you battle today. Stay positive and fight like hell! You girls are my heroes and I cannot wait to see you all again," and her note was taped up in the Skyhawk soccer locker room where it was read by each team member as they walked down to the field; and

WHEREAS, despite having to endure incredible pain, Emily Miller has maintained the same positive attitude which has always been characteristic of her outlook on life; and

WHEREAS, despite having a temperature of 104.6 degrees, she persuaded her doctors to allow her to travel to the Martin campus to address 300 athletes in the Skyhawk fieldhouse where Emily told her teammates to "... live life and be grateful, even if you are running sprints and working hard to get in shape."; her words and example inspired the Skyhawks to print T-shirts with the message "If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it"; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee Martin was also inspired to conduct a fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in which more than \$5,000 was raised in the Million Mile Marathon, run by members of the student body, faculty, and the Senate sponsor of this resolution, who was honored to do so; and

WHEREAS, Emily attended every Skyhawk soccer game that she could during the season, persevering through the pain of walking to be with her teammates and enthusiastically cheering them on; her courage and endurance made a deep impression on the team, the student body, the faculty, the administration of the University of Tennessee at Martin, and so many others; and

WHEREAS, Emily Miller has become a spokeswoman for St. Jude, and will appear in a video entitled "A Time for Hope," with Marlo Thomas; she also speaks to groups and individuals about St. Jude's remarkable research and treatment programs in order to raise money for the hospital; and

WHEREAS, although presently Emily remains at home because the medication she takes for pain prevents her from driving and she still manifests the effects of harsh chemotherapy, she plans to return to college next fall to complete her degree; following graduation she plans to attend nursing school so that she can have a career as a much-needed Spanish-speaking nurse at St. Jude; and

WHEREAS, it is indeed fitting that this legislative body pause in its deliberations to honor Ms. Miller for her remarkable courage and persistence in overcoming the effects of a serious malady and for using her experience to inspire others; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we congratulate Emily Avery Miller upon being named the 2004 NCAA Inspiration Award recipient, honor her for her courage and determination in fighting through serious illness, painful and debilitating treatment, and surgery to pursue her education and to offer inspiration to her team members and fellow students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we thank Ms. Miller for her dedication to the advancement of the mission of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital through her inspirational fund raising activities, and offer her our heartiest wishes for her every success as she pursues her career goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.